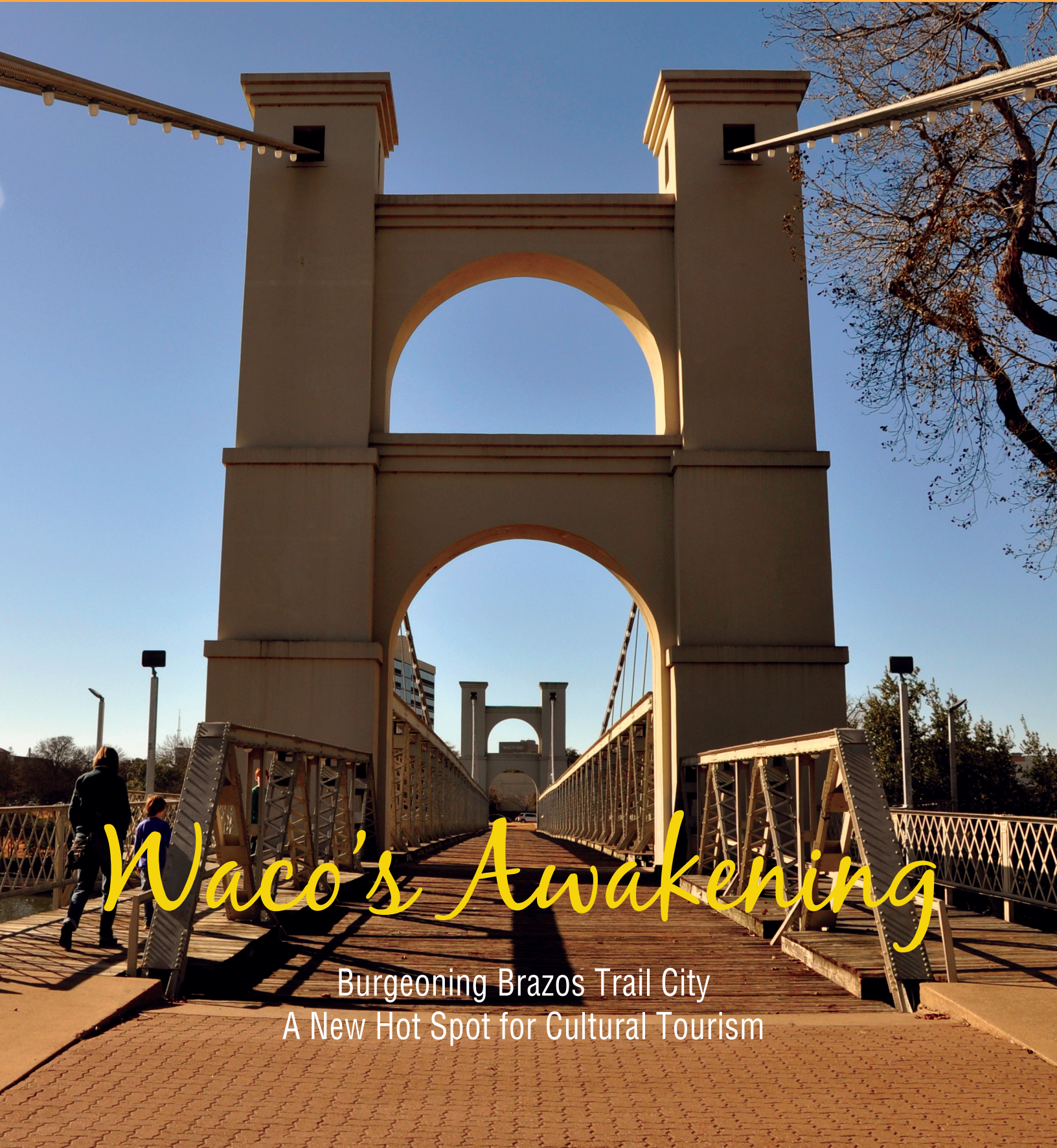


TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

# THE MEDALLION

SUMMER 2016



## Waco's Awakening

Burgeoning Brazos Trail City  
A New Hot Spot for Cultural Tourism





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**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

# THE MEDALLION

SUMMER 2016

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ON THE COVER: Waco's historic  
suspension bridge. Photo: Andy Rhodes.

**FAST FACTS**

These numbers show the significant economic impact  
of cultural travel in Waco.

**1.3**

**MILLION VISITORS  
ANNUALLY TO WACO'S  
SILO DISTRICT**

**6,300**

**JOBS SUPPORTED  
BY WACO TOURISM**

**\$26.4**

**MILLION VISITOR  
CONTRIBUTION TO WACO'S  
STATE TAX REVENUE**

Source: Waco Convention & Visitors Bureau





My Fellow Texans,

Senate District 22 in the heart of Texas is a perfect microcosm of our state: part rural, part suburban, part urban. Each area in SD-22 can make for a great place to raise a family, grow a business, and enjoy life. Many of our communities participate in the THC's historic preservation programs that contribute to the rich cultural value of Texas.

Heritage tourism can boost the economy no matter where you live. The majority of the counties I serve feature magnificent courthouses, with seven of those buildings having been restored to the glory of their historic period through the THC's work.

The Main Street program offers expert advice on using historic preservation to create nostalgia magnets from revitalized downtowns. Seven cities in SD-22 benefit from that program. My hometown of Granbury, while not a participant, continues to practice the lessons that made it the model for the Texas Main Street concept launched in 1981.

In this *Medallion* issue you will read more about historic sites in Waco, the largest Main Street community in my district, and how it benefits from cultural tourists.

So—how will those travelers find the history in your town?

The Texas Heritage Trails initiative is designed to help cultural travelers find local history in every geographic area of our state. Two of the 10 trail regions covering Texas, the Brazos and Lakes Trail Regions, work directly with the towns in SD-22 to enhance economic development through tourism. Working at the grassroots level with cities and counties, chambers of commerce, visitors' bureaus, private businesses, and local museums and historic sites, the Trail Regions leverage thousands of volunteer hours to bring people through our great towns.

Our heritage and preserving the places that tell our stories enhance the quality of life for all Texans. Read on, and I hope to see you in one of the many special communities in Senate District 22 soon.

Sincerely,

Brian Birdwell  
Texas Senate, District 22



# Texas to Observe the ‘War to End All Wars’

THC Seeks World War I Historic Resources to Honor Upcoming Centennial Anniversary

By William McWhorter  
THC Staff

On April 6, 2017, Texans will observe the 100th anniversary of America’s entry into World War I. The war had a profound impact on the United States and Texas. While causing great loss for many, it also positioned the United States to become a world power in the 20th century.

Texas, by virtue of its distinguished role in the war from 1917 to 1919, was once home to thousands of veterans who enlisted or were drafted into service. Moreover, tens of thousands from across the nation were assigned to posts throughout the Lone Star State, which hosted dozens of training facilities.

In observance of the centennial anniversary, Gov. Greg Abbott directed the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to serve as the lead agency to commemorate the role Texas played during World War I. The THC’s Texas First World War Centennial Commemoration will officially observe a period from April 6, 2017 (the U.S. Declaration of War on Germany) through June 28, 2019 (signing of the Treaty of Versailles that ended

the war between the Allied powers and Germany).

Today, generations after the end of World War I, evidence of that era and reminders of its impact on Texas can still be found. The war’s enduring influence is obvious in honor rolls, monuments, and historical markers; at active military installations, such as San Antonio’s Fort Sam Houston and El Paso’s Fort Bliss; and at county and state parks such as Galveston’s Fort Travis and La Porte’s Battleship Texas State Historic Site.

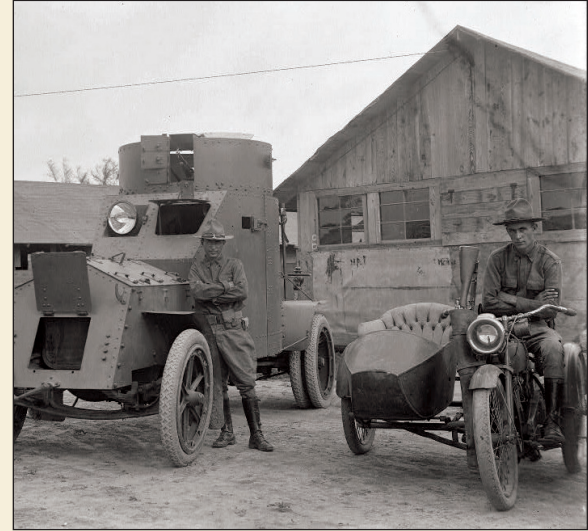
The THC’s commemorative efforts will educate Texans and honor the Lone Star State’s World War I experience. Three initial projects include a new, dedicated page on the agency’s website, a mobile-app tour, and a request of the public to help determine where World War I is interpreted or preserved in Texas.

## WWI IN TEXAS

In 1917, Texas responded impressively to the national war effort. Approximately 989,600 Texans registered for the war, and according to the Texas Veterans

Commission, 198,000 Texans served in the military (including 450 Texas women as nurses). Three Texans earned the Medal of Honor.

Tragically, at least 5,246 Texans died in service. Their tombstones stand in France



While the horse played a significant role in the U.S. Army during World War I, the use of mechanized vehicles increased. The armored car and motorcycle above are at Fort Brown’s horse stables in Brownsville.

and in urban and rural cemeteries across Texas.

Texas’ World War I-related military presence is noteworthy. Texas and Oklahoma fielded two full-strength infantry divisions: the storied 36th and 90th. Texans also made up a portion of a third division (the 42nd) while serving in additional units that formed, trained, and deployed in Texas and across the nation.

In addition, Texas hosted 19 U.S. Army posts, of which at least nine served as military training camps. These garrisons were joined by another nine military training airfields—several of which helped train British and Canadian flying cadets. The *U.S.S. Texas* (BB-35), a dreadnought-era battleship (the principal type of early 20th-century warship) served in the Atlantic Ocean, joining the 6th Battle Squadron of the British Grand Fleet in 1918. Today she is berthed along the Houston Ship Channel, adjacent to the San Jacinto Battleground.



A 1918 parade of the 36th Infantry Division in downtown Fort Worth.



Texas was a segregated state in 1917, so there was little public consideration for civil rights and equal employment opportunities. However, women and minorities still contributed to the war effort in both military service and home-front production.

On the home front, Texans primarily lived on farms and ranches or in small towns, yet they responded to the nation's call to support the war effort with Liberty Bond drives and Red Cross training. Manpower shortages and increased wartime needs opened up new employment opportunities for Texans. Farm families and small-town residents moved to major cities to work in war industry plants and at military posts. Those who returned home after the war found, in many ways, a new and dynamic Texas.

## VIEWING VESTIGES

County Historical Commissions and like-minded preservationists can help the THC create an inventory of locations housing World War I-related exhibits, archives, trophy artillery, memorials, markers, and monuments. The information culled by this request for assistance will benefit not only heritage tourists, but historians and public school students actively conducting research during the centennial.

While the THC honors the service of individual veterans, this is not a call for information on where every uniform, helmet, or medal might be held in family or private collections; rather, the agency is attempting to determine where heritage visitor-accessible sites are located.

Email information to [TXinWWISurvey@thc.texas.gov](mailto:TXinWWISurvey@thc.texas.gov), noting what resources are located in your community. If possible, include a photo, the street address, or GPS waypoint for the location of the resource. You can also mail information to:

Texas Historical Commission  
Military Sites Program  
P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711-2276

## MOVING FORWARD

An exciting travel-friendly resource is already underway. The THC's Heritage Tourism program is developing a new mobile tour about World War I on the Texas Home Front, scheduled to launch in early 2017 in time for the centennial.

"We're excited to highlight the World War I home-front history that may not be widely known by Texas residents or visitors," said Brad Patterson, director of the THC's Community Heritage Development Division. "It's exciting to connect folks with this info during the centennial of this important conflict."

Additional World War I commemorative efforts have been organized at the national and state levels in honor of the "Great War." The U.S. World War I Centennial Commemoration Commission will plan, develop, and execute programs, projects, and activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I.

Statewide, the Texas World War I Centennial Commission was created by volunteers with a passion for preserving the history of Texas' involvement in the First World War. Since 2015, the organization has actively engaged local stakeholders, including museums, civic and veteran groups, historic sites, academic institutions, military bases, and more. To learn more, visit [thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov).

Over the coming year, the THC's website will feature additional information about the centennial. Texans are encouraged to share information regarding the war's legacy in their communities, and plan centennial observances in their counties. For more information about the THC's efforts, contact the agency's History Programs Division at 512-463-5853. ★



This monument in Fort Worth's Veterans Memorial Park commemorates Texans' service during World War I.





# Waco's Awakening

## Burgeoning Brazos Trail City Becoming Hot Spot for Cultural Tourism

Text and photos by Andy Rhodes, *The Medallion* Managing Editor

There's a renewed energy in Waco. Gone are the references to it being a pit stop between Dallas and Austin or the "Buckle of the Bible Belt." Now, residents and heritage travelers are proudly touting Waco as the home of exciting destinations, including the National Park Service's new Mammoth National Monument and enormously popular homespun enterprise and TV program (HGTV/Magnolia's "Fixer Upper").

The city of 130,194 residents has been growing steadily and is the largest metropolitan area in the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Brazos Trail Region. The region remains a vital part of the THC's Texas Heritage Trails Program, despite its inactive status as it awaits funding to continue promoting travel destinations in the area.

Historically, Waco's cultural bedrock has been Baylor University. Its roots date to 1845, when it was chartered by



Top: Waco's Magnolia Market draws 30,000 visitors downtown weekly. Above: Museum Exhibits Manager Trey Crumpton demonstrates the interactive Cabinet of Curiosities exhibit at the Mayborn Museum.

the Republic of Texas; as such, it claims to be the oldest continually operating university in the state. By the late 1800s, Baylor had grown to become a major presence in the burgeoning city on the Brazos River.

"Baylor was one of Waco's biggest employers at that time, and it served an important role as a hub for culture and learning," says Trey Crumpton, exhibits manager at the university's Mayborn Museum Complex. "It also helped

bring a lot of people to this city in search of a quality Christian education."

In the early 1900s, local herpetologist John Strecker began collecting items from Baylor community members, who acquired captivating souvenirs as they traveled throughout the world on missionary trips. These items, known as curiosities, were added to a cabinet of uncommon objects the university had been collecting since 1857



(thereby making it the oldest continually operating museum in the state, according to the Handbook of Texas).

The assemblage grew into a fascinating mix of odds and ends, many of which comprise Strecker's Cabinet of Curiosities that now serves as an entry exhibit at Baylor's Mayborn Museum.

Visitors peer squeamishly at jars of formaldehyde with creepy floating creatures, and marvel at the 19-foot long skull from a 3,000-pound humpback whale; meanwhile, taxidermied critters and smiling animal skulls lurk above them on a high shelf. Attached to the Victorian-style cabinets are touch screens inviting visitors to discover the most curious object and discern its origins and background.

"This is our homage to natural history museums from the turn of the previous century," says Crumpton. "At that time, a lot of museums were going for shock value and visual entertainment."

Crumpton adds that the Mayborn Museum, which opened in 2004, focuses on the unique heritage of Central Texas. Since he helped catalog the museum's collection when it opened, Crumpton discovered details about each curiosity in the Mayborn's diverse holdings.

"One of the more interesting things I learned is that we have the country's largest collection of freshwater oysters," he says with a smile. "As far as most museums go, we don't have an enormous collection, but what we have is certainly historic. One of our most significant claims is that we're the official repository and caretakers for the Waco Mammoth National Monument."

Crumpton explains that Baylor's partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) and the City of Waco has been an ideal working relationship. Known as the Texas Model, the partnership allows each entity to contribute its strengths (collections management, research, municipal procedure, etc.), thereby complementing each others' work. Their experience helped establish a turnkey process for the NPS to recognize a local heritage site at the federal level. The results are impressive—since opening as an NPS site in July 2015, visitation has doubled.

On campus, the Mayborn team also devotes significant efforts to connecting with Baylor's 16,000 students. Most importantly, student workers assist in various departments, allowing them to experience real-life situations that will benefit their museum studies. In addition, the greater student body periodically meets at the Mayborn for classes, uses the lab facilities, or even hosts scavenger hunts.

"We want students to know that it's their museum and they can always visit for free," Crumpton says.

Baylor visitors can also stroll the campus to see historic buildings like Pat Neff Hall and the nearby Bear Habitat to

meet its 275-pound docile dwellers Joy and Lady. Back at the Mayborn Museum Complex, travelers can explore the Historic Village, a collection of structures from Liberty, Texas, donated to Baylor by Gov. Bill and Vara Daniel in 1985. The nine wood-frame buildings—including a church, schoolhouse, and sutler's store—are extremely popular with children, who scramble through the buildings and, in the process, learn about late-1800s Texas.

"All over the museum we're trying to get people to use their senses, and that's especially true in the village," Crumpton explains. "It tends to help visitors remember their experiences, like hearing the sound of corn kernels cracking in a grinder, or smelling old wood in the commissary. We've been able to effectively use these structures as educational tools—they're not just filled with rusted old items like the stuff in grandpa's garage."



Above: Students visit a late-1800s church at the Mayborn Museum's Historic Village.

## DOWNTOWN DIVERSIONS

Just west of Baylor past Interstate 35 lies Waco's downtown district, a formerly quiet area that has become revitalized with new businesses in historic buildings. Among these century-old structures is one of the city's trademark tourist draws: the **Dr Pepper Museum** ([drpeppermuseum.com](http://drpeppermuseum.com), 254-757-1025).

Visitors pass beneath a large archway to enter the orange-brick building, which dates to 1906 and initially served as a bottling facility. The soft drink is even older—originating in 1885 just a few blocks away at the former Morrison's Old Corner Drug Store.

"The oldest soft drink isn't from Atlanta, it's from right here in Waco," says the museum's founding president Wilton Lanning (without even mentioning rival Coca-Cola).





Top: The Dr Pepper Museum features an old-fashioned soda fountain where visitors can sample the Waco-born soft drink. Right: Magnolia Market is a major travel destination.



Although Morrison's drug store did not survive the city's devastating 1953 tornado, the signature beverage it spawned endures as one of the country's most popular soft drinks. According to Dr Pepper staff, pharmacist Charles Alderton became enchanted by the fruit-syrup smells in the drug store, prompting him to experiment with dozens of flavor combinations.

"Contrary to some rumors, it was not invented as a pharmaceutical remedy—Alderton just really enjoyed experimenting with the syrups and interacting with the patrons," says Mary Beth Farrell, the museum's communications manager. "Dr Pepper has 23 different flavors, so it was a pretty inventive combination."

The origins of Dr Pepper's name are lost to history, but its fascinating background takes center stage at the museum. The soda's story is told through artifacts like beguiling glass bottles and World War II-era metal cans; turquoise-colored 1950s soda machines and ad campaigns (including the famous slogan, "Drink a bite to eat at 10, 2, and 4"); and a 27-foot deep artesian well that once supplied the soda's water.

In addition, a new museum wing opened this summer in an adjacent warehouse. The historic building now houses new exhibits, including a mock bottling line, "cooking with Dr Pepper" laboratory, and a historical transportation display about soda distribution methods from Waco.

Currently outpacing the Dr Pepper Museum as Waco's top travel destination is **Magnolia** ([magnoliamarket.com](http://magnoliamarket.com), 254-235-6111), a new arrival that draws 30,000 visitors a week. In 2003, Baylor graduates Chip and Joanna Gaines modestly began their home décor/restoration empire (the couple's "Fixer Upper" show on HGTV is shattering the network's ratings records) with a small store southwest of downtown. Their focus later shifted to rehabilitating Waco-area

homes—many of them historic—eventually leading to "Fixer Upper" and a larger Magnolia Market home-furnishings store.

Now operating as a major cultural destination in the heart of Waco's historic downtown, the Gaines' headquarters are known as Magnolia Silos. The complex includes a popular retail shop in a former grain barn, a food truck court with local vendors, a garden area, and a large lawn with games for family activities. The site is dominated by two large silos dating to circa 1912, when the Brazos Valley Cotton Oil Co. extracted oil from cottonseeds and used the meal for cattle feed. The silos currently serve as a collective beacon and

backdrop, with future plans to renovate them for unspecified use in the Magnolia complex.

Just a few blocks north is another significant attraction—the **Waco Suspension Bridge**, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The famous landmark was built in 1870 as a 475-foot long toll bridge spanning the Brazos River, and was one of the world's longest single-span suspension bridges. The massive steel cables and girders were commissioned by the company that later built the Brooklyn Bridge.

Vehicular traffic traversed beneath its lofty towers for nearly a century before it became pedestrian-only in 1971. The large bronze longhorn statues and THC marker at the



Top: The 1902 McLennan County Courthouse is in the National Register. Right: The Waco Mammoth National Monument is one of the National Park Service's newest sites.



south bank of the river offer a reminder of its historical status as a Chisholm Trail crossing site.

While downtown, visitors should also stroll past the impressive **McLennan County Courthouse**, a Classical Revival structure with Beaux Art influences designed by noted Texas architect J. Riely Gordon. Dating to 1902, the courthouse is in the National Register and is a THC Recorded Texas Historic Landmark.

Dominating an adjacent downtown block—and the Waco skyline—is the 1911 **Alico Building**. Once the tallest building in the Southwest, the 22-story office of Amicable Life Insurance Co. was a rare survivor of the 1953 tornado.

In Alico's shadow are several popular eateries in historic buildings drawing many travelers and positive reviews. Most notable are **Dichotomy** ([dichotomycs.com](http://dichotomycs.com), 254-714-1710), offering perfectly prepared coffee and pastries with stylish décor, and **Schmaltz's Sandwich Shoppe** ([schmaltzsandwichshop.com](http://schmaltzsandwichshop.com), 254-753-2332) a local favorite dating to 1975, featuring round oven-toasted sandwiches on tasty artisanal bread. From there, visitors can walk two blocks south to see the impressive 1914 **Waco Hippodrome Theatre** ([wacohippodrometheatre.com](http://wacohippodrometheatre.com), 254-296-9000), which recently received financial assistance from THC-administered state and federal tax credits.

## HUGE HISTORY

About 10 minutes west of downtown is the **Waco Mammoth National Monument** ([nps.gov/waco](http://nps.gov/waco), 254-750-7946). One of the newest NPS sites, the mammoth monument showcases a fascinating slice of Texas' prehistory.

Nearly 70,000 years ago, a herd of at least 19 mammoths likely perished in a Bosque River flash flood; their remains

weren't discovered until 1978, when two young men found a protruding bone and reported it to Baylor University scientists. Site visitors learn about the history of the type of mammoth (Columbian as opposed to Woolly) while gazing at the fossils from an overhead walkway in a climate-controlled dig shelter.



The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum honors the famous law enforcement group.

Almost as legendary in Texas lore is the subject featured at another historical Waco attraction—the **Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum** ([texasranger.org](http://texasranger.org), 254-750-8631). The museum's Christine Rothenbush explains that in 1823, Stephen F. Austin asked for 10 volunteers to protect the area that was already part of his colony. That group went on to become the Texas Rangers, famous for their sharp skills and elite law enforcement services.

The museum showcases their legacy through artifacts, firearms, and photos. The Hall of Fame honors 30 of the most distinguished Rangers in history, and a research center contains news clippings, genealogies, and archives.

"A lot of our visitors are other law enforcement personnel or people who grew up admiring the Rangers," Rothenbush says. "Many people learned about them through pop culture and TV shows like the Lone Ranger and Walker, Texas Ranger—they feel they know these fictional rangers, but want to learn more about the real ones. They have nearly 200 years of history, and there aren't a whole lot of things in Texas that have endured that long."

View more Waco photos at [thc.texas.gov/blog](http://thc.texas.gov/blog).

To learn about other significant heritage sites in Waco, a Texas Main Street City, and the surrounding area, download a free copy of the THC's *Texas Brazos Trail Region* travel guide at [texastimetravel.com](http://texastimetravel.com).





# Float On

## Drift through East Texas History on Limestone Bluffs Paddling Trail

By Rob Hodges

THC Senior Digital Media Coordinator

There's good news and bad news when you arrive at Fort Parker State Park on the 5.3-mile Limestone Bluffs Paddling Trail. Bad news first: Although you've already put in a few miles on the Navasota River, you're not done yet—this is only the first boat ramp, not the take-out point for the trail. Also, the hardest part is yet to come—crossing the expansive (and possibly semi-choppy) Fort Parker Lake.

The good news? The entire voyage from Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site, a Texas Historical Commission (THC) property, to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Fort Parker State Park is relatively easy. And extremely enjoyable. All it takes is about 3.5 hours to paddle, some snacks and water, a bit of stamina, and some extra time to explore both of these compelling historical sites in the THC's Texas Brazos Trail Region.

Upon arrival at Confederate Reunion Grounds, take a moment to visit Old Val Verde, a Union cannon captured by the Confederacy in the 1864 battle at Mansfield, Louisiana. Another focal point is the 1893 dance pavilion, an intricately crafted octagonal structure that's listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



Veterans of the CCC group that helped build Fort Parker State Park.

Under normal conditions, paddling the rural stretch of the Navasota River between Confederate Reunion Grounds and Fort Parker Lake is a lazy float on flat

water. The river twists and turns through hardwood bottomlands and the namesake limestone bluffs, with an occasional felled tree to circumvent—evidence of flooding and proof that the Navasota is not always so calm.

But on a normal day, there's little to disrupt the serenity—chances are good you'll be the only witness to the occasional jumping fish, sunbathing turtle, or waterfowl skimming the surface. Once the river spills into the lake and you leave the buffer zone of the forest, you may have to deal with crosswinds and a bumpier, slower ride, but it's not too difficult.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created the 750-acre lake by damming the river in 1938. From 1935 to 1942, Company 3807(C), a segregated African American CCC camp, completed many projects in the area. Constructed mostly by hand, the 423-foot limestone and concrete dam across the Navasota River was one of the most arduous CCC projects in the state.

A couple miles south of the park, Company 3807(C) constructed Old Fort Parker for the 1936 Texas Centennial. A replica of the Parker



Kayakers depart on the Navasota River from the THC's Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site.

family's 1830s stockade and cabins, the compound commemorates one of the most dramatic episodes in Texas history. On May 19, 1836, a group of Comanche and other

Indians attacked the Parker stockade, killing five people and capturing five, including 9-year-old Cynthia Ann Parker, who became mother of Quanah Parker—the last chief of the Quahada Comanches.

Back in the state park named after the old fort, another historical marker commemorates the town of Springfield, founded in 1838 and the first county seat of Limestone County. Once bustling, its population plummeted after being bypassed by the railroad in the 1870s. It then became a freedmen's community; eventually, the state park was constructed over it. Today, the Old Springfield Cemetery and its historical marker are all that remain of the town. ★

### IF YOU GO...

Canoes and kayaks can be rented and a shuttle arranged at TPWD's Fort Parker State Park. Pro tips: Before your excursion, fuel up with catfish and grilled veggies at Mexia's Farm House Restaurant. Also, at the conclusion of your paddling journey, when crossing Fort Parker Lake, navigate toward the large CCC-constructed activity center and follow the shoreline around to the boat ramp on the back of the peninsula.



# Cemetery Queries

## THC Program Staff Address Three Frequently Asked Questions

By Jennifer McWilliams  
Cemetery Preservation Program Coordinator

Within the field of historic preservation, cemeteries present an interesting challenge, with issues spanning from land and legal considerations to maintenance and preservation concerns. The Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Cemetery Preservation Program receives numerous inquiries about cemeteries. Here are answers to three frequently asked questions.

### Who owns a cemetery?

Historically, family members in Texas were often buried near their farms and ranches. As a community grew, a philanthropic landowner may have set aside land for a cemetery. With no need for formal dedication, record keeping, or ceremony, the cemetery was used by family and community members until it was no longer needed due to population decline or the creation of a new cemetery near a church or town.

The land was typically passed to a family's descendants or, in some cases, sold outright. Sometimes the cemetery was separately deeded off of the larger land tract, but many times it was sold as part of the property—with or without any reference to the cemetery. Therefore, determining ownership often requires a thorough review of deed records or property transfer documents.

Regardless of who holds title to cemetery land, each grave is protected by law. Cemeteries are considered to be held

in trust for the benefit of those interred. The grave or cemetery need not be listed in the county deed records or separated by a fence to be protected under state law. Once a property is dedicated for cemetery use, it cannot be disturbed or used for any other purpose, including grazing or improvements, until the dedication is legally removed, a process outlined in Sec. 711.004 of the Texas Health and Safety Code ([statutes.legis.state.tx.us](http://statutes.legis.state.tx.us)).

however, this right does not provide permission to trespass. Contact the property owner prior to visiting. The landowner is permitted to establish reasonable hours and may designate the routes.

### Is funding available for historic cemetery maintenance?

As time passes, there are fewer family and community members to maintain cemeteries, resulting in hundreds of neglected sites. In the past, cemetery associations often formed to oversee a

cemetery, and the group may have held traditional fundraising events such as barbecues or fish fries associated with maintenance days, family reunions, or Decoration Days. These events remain successful ways to generate funds while connecting descendants who may be far removed from their ancestral burial grounds.

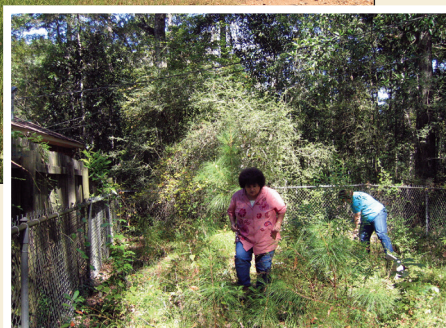
The THC does not provide grant funding specifically for cemetery maintenance, but some cemeteries could qualify for restoration or educational project grant monies through the agency's Texas Preservation Trust Fund ([thc.texas.gov/tptf](http://thc.texas.gov/tptf)). Local governments may also provide financial

assistance, equipment, or labor for maintenance projects.

If you have additional questions, please contact the THC's Jennifer McWilliams at [Jenny.Mcwilliams@thc.texas.gov](mailto:Jenny.Mcwilliams@thc.texas.gov) or 512-475-4506. ★



Above: Many historic Texas cemeteries are on private property. Right: Community members are encouraged to organize cemetery maintenance events.



### How do I access a cemetery on private property?

The THC does not play a role in granting access to cemeteries on private property. The only way to access many cemeteries is to cross private property.

The Health and Safety Code allows visitors the right to access a cemetery;



# Preservation Education

## Meet the THC's Diversity Interns

By *Andy Rhodes*  
Managing Editor, *The Medallion*

For many Texas students, summer vacation means traveling with family to a cooler climate or a trip to the gulf coast. Others choose to forego this educational break via internships like the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Diversity Interns program.

Two college students—Haian Abdirahman (attending graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin) and Victor Hurtado (an undergraduate student at the University of Texas at El Paso)—recently accepted the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission's invitation to participate in the summer program. They will spend several months learning real-world lessons about jobs and projects in the field of preservation.

Both interns agreed to answer a series of questions about their interest in Texas history and their plans for the future (extended versions of the interviews are at [thc.texas.gov/blog](http://thc.texas.gov/blog)).

### HAIAN ABDIRAHMAN

**Why did you decide to pursue this internship opportunity with the THC?** My experience with historic preservation is mainly in the “unbuilt” environment, through my work as a manuscript and visual media archivist. I applied for the THC's internship because I want to understand how historic preservation operates in the built environment, and how communities can be trained in preserving that environment.

**Why is Texas an interesting place to pursue a career in a history-related field?** What really interests me in Texas



From left: Haian Abdirahman and Victor Hurtado.

is the state's siloed consciousness. For example, the memories of so many asylum-seeking immigrants (who experienced migration, imprisonment, hearings, and acts of violence) are rarely listened to in the Texas immigration policy sphere. What other memories are similarly ignored, and how can they be preserved and employed?

**How do you like to spend your free time?** I don't have a car, so much of my free time in Austin is spent walking. But what's come of that is a newfound pastime of looking for sticker and street art around my neighborhood. I'm also spending a few evenings a week in a pottery class. It's been shaping up to be a nice summer.

### VICTOR HURTADO

**Why did you decide to pursue this internship opportunity with the THC?** Having been born and raised in El Paso, I grew to appreciate the architectural history of the borderland. Given that many of El Paso's historic buildings have been deteriorating through time, I was motivated to gain training in architectural preservation to help

preserve my hometown's cultural and architectural heritage.

**How have your past experiences prepared you for interning with the agency?** As a third-year undergraduate college student, I've been involved with museums and history-related organizations such as the El Paso County Historical Commission, Texas Trost Society, and the El Paso Museum of Art. In 2014, I independently developed a documentary film and became

vocal about the demolition of the John T. Muir building, a neoclassical edifice. Through my volunteer-based involvement in the community, I have learned the basics of tax credit programs, grants, and National Register nominations.

**What are you looking forward to accomplishing during your internship this summer?** While living in Austin and working for the THC for two months, I hope to acquire a new set of skills that I can apply in my hometown. This learning experience will enable me to appreciate Texas' built environment a lot more.

**How do you anticipate using your experience at the THC in the future?** I hope to take my experience with the THC and make a significant contribution to the ongoing preservation movement in El Paso. As I develop a documentary film about preservation in El Paso, I anticipate incorporating some information acquired through the THC.

The THC's Diversity Internship program is funded solely by private gifts. To make a donation, please visit [thcfriends.org](http://thcfriends.org). ★



# The Grass of Home

## Caddo Mounds Dwelling Recreated on Historic Site's Grounds

By Heather McBride  
THC Senior Communications Specialist

More than 1,200 years ago, a group of Caddo Indians known as the Hasinai built a village overlooking the Neches River 26 miles west of present-day Nacogdoches. The site was the southwestern-most ceremonial center for the great Mound Builder culture. Today, three earthen mounds still rise from the lush Pineywoods landscape, although there are no remains of the Hasinai's grass houses.

But soon, those who travel to Caddo Mounds State Historic Site will see a towering, rotund, grass-covered house on the grounds—a recreation of the unique dwellings.

"We're excited to move forward with our dream of a new Caddo house," said site manager Anthony Souther.

The house is the result of a beneficial 2014 fundraising project from the Friends of Caddo Mounds, work from the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, and generous grants from the Summerlee and Tides foundations. In addition, the Texas Historical Foundation provided a grant that will be used to record the construction of the house in a video for educational outreach.

Described as "beehive-shaped" by early explorers, the Caddo grass houses were commonly 30 feet in diameter and often were home to extended families. Some ceremonial structures were up to 60 feet in diameter.

After identifying and locating appropriate building materials—including switch grass, pine, and

"The purpose of our new grass house is to strengthen relationships, increase awareness, encourage stewardship, and preserve Caddo traditions."

— Anthony Souther, Caddo Mounds State Historic Site manager



Above right: Reconstruction of the grass house at Caddo Mounds. Above: An undated photo of a previous grass house reconstructed at the site.

willow—site staff began gathering poles and other construction elements.

"The purpose of our new grass house is to strengthen relationships, increase awareness, encourage stewardship, and preserve Caddo traditions," said Souther. "While the Caddo people who populated this site have been gone since about 1300 AD, the spirit of this sacred place lives on in all that we do here."

Construction began in late June, and was expected to take nearly three weeks to complete. It involved



identifying, cutting, and debarking pine poles for the vertical uprights, laying out and preparing the house location, setting the poles, and attaching the vertical willow lath and thatch material. A house blessing ceremony is planned for September involving the Caddo Nation, project sponsors, and volunteers who helped build the house.

According to Souther, Caddo Nation member Phil Cross will be leading

the construction, assisted by Caddo apprentice Chad Earles, THC staff, and volunteers.

"By constructing this grass house, we hope to bring Caddo people and non-Caddo members of our community together," Souther said. "This project allows us the opportunity to document the entire construction process through photos and video, and it will give our visitors a unique and authentic look into the lifeways of the ancient people who lived at Caddo Mounds."

To volunteer or help fund this project, visit the Caddo Mounds Facebook page or [visitcaddomounds.com](http://visitcaddomounds.com). ★

**CADDO MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE**  
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# Banking on Eastland County History

Members of the Eastland County Historical Commission (ECHC) and Texas Historical Commission (THC) staff were on hand for a recent historical marker dedication in Ranger. The marker commemorates the Bankhead Highway's route through Eastland County (between Abilene and Fort Worth), including geographical features like the "Big Hill" and a scenic roadside park developed by the Works Progress Administration.

The dedication ceremony, held at the marker site on the westbound frontage road of Interstate 20, was well attended despite cool and rainy weather. Event highlights included performances by a choir and band representing local schools. ★

For more information about the THC's historical marker and Bankhead Highway programs, visit [thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov).



Pictured from left are: ECHC members Wynelle Brown and Donna Thackerson, THC marker coordinator Bob Brinkman, ECHC members Ginger Tobin and Jeane Pruett, THC Historic Highway coordinator Leslie Wolfenden, and the ECHC's Anne Zoellick.

## THC REQUESTS SUBMISSIONS FOR ONLINE ARCHEOLOGY MONTH CALENDAR

Texas Archeology Month (TAM) is just around the corner in October, and the THC is seeking event submissions from the public for the annual TAM Calendar of Events. The THC invites anyone hosting an archeology- or history-related event in conjunction with TAM to submit information to the agency via the electronic TAM Event Form at [bit.ly/1HhUH16](http://bit.ly/1HhUH16). The deadline for submissions is September 15.

Submitted information will be added to the TAM Calendar of Events on the THC website. It will be posted in August and updated biweekly through late September. Staff urges contributors to use the electronic form and not send TAM event information by mail or email to ensure the event is included.

The THC cosponsors TAM in association with the Texas Archeological Society and the Council of Texas Archeologists.

For more information, contact the THC's TAM Coordinator Casey Hanson at 512-463-5915 or [Casey.Hanson@thc.texas.gov](mailto:Casey.Hanson@thc.texas.gov), or the Archeology Division at 512-463-6096.

## FREE ADMISSION FOR MILITARY AT STATE HISTORIC SITES THIS SUMMER

The THC's state historic sites will participate in the Blue Star Museums program, which gives active military personnel and their families free admission to museums and historic sites across Texas and the U.S. Coordinated by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the program continues through Labor Day, September 5.

From western forts that defended the frontier to grand historic mansions, the THC's state historic sites offer a range of travel destinations where families can connect and experience the most exciting periods of Texas history. Several sites are dedicated to preserving the memory of military service in Texas, including the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg and Fort Griffin State Historic Site in Albany. Many of the sites recently made significant updates, including a new visitors center at Fort Lancaster in Sheffield and top-to-bottom renovations at Fulton Mansion in Rockport and Landmark Inn in Castroville.

This year, more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states are taking part in the initiative, including more than 500 new museums. Blue Star Museums is a collaboration between the NEA, Blue Star Families, and the Department of Defense. To find participating museums and plan a trip, visit [arts.gov/bluestarmuseums](http://arts.gov/bluestarmuseums).

For more information on the THC's state historic sites, visit [texashistoricsites.com](http://texashistoricsites.com).

### TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION Texas Archeology Month 2016 Calendar of Events

Coordinated by the Texas Historical Commission  
in association with  
the Texas Archeological Society  
and  
the Council of Texas Archeologists

Texas Archeology Month (TAM) promotes the appreciation of scientific archeology, prehistory, Native American cultures, and the stewardship of Texas' irreplaceable archeological resources. No matter where you are in Texas, a community near you is hosting an archeology fair in October. Check out the listings in this Calendar of Events for archeology events around the state, as well as heritage and frontier festivals, which often include archeology activities.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) partners to organize TAM events with a number of dedicated individuals and organizations each year, the primary organizers being the THC's Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN), the Texas Archeological Society, and County Historical Commissions (CHC). These organizations have been joined by various other TAM event coordinators that represent local, regional, and statewide organizations. Traditionally, TAM organizers include regional archeological and historical societies, museums, libraries, schools, and other educational institutions, along with parks, preserves, and historic sites. In addition, we also have TAM events that are hosted by professional associations, natural and cultural resource management firms, military organizations, conservation groups, and even chambers of commerce. TAM would not be possible without our supporters and the help of our stewards who organize, promote, and facilitate much of this annual statewide event.

This calendar contains the most up-to-date information available to us. To verify information, it is advisable to contact organizers listed for each event. If you would like to announce an event or update an existing calendar entry, contact the THC's Archeology Division at 512-463-6096 or [archeology@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:archeology@thc.state.tx.us).



# The Role of a CHC Appointee

## Recommendations and Reminders for New and Seasoned Appointees

By Amy Hammons

County Historical Commission Outreach Coordinator

The County Historical Commission (CHC) Outreach program receives calls each week asking for in-person presentations. Outreach staff conducted eight CHC orientations this year, providing training to more than 200 appointees from more than 60 counties. Didn't make an orientation? Don't worry, because there are plenty of opportunities for appointees to self-educate. Here are some suggestions for new and seasoned appointees that will increase your understanding of a CHC's mission:

1. **Read the CHC statute.** Texas Local Government Code Chapter 318 enables county commissioners courts to establish CHCs. The statute is brief, but provides parameters to which CHCs must adhere. To find this statute, search for "Role of a CHC Appointee" on the Texas Historical Commission (THC) website ([thc.texas.gov](http://thc.texas.gov)).
2. **Read CHC bylaws.** Most CHCs have bylaws to provide organizational structure that complies with the CHC statute and offers general guidelines that help CHCs conduct business appropriately. If your CHC has bylaws, make sure all appointees read them and refer to them as needed.

### 3. Read CHC reports.

Most CHCs file an annual report each year with the THC. Contact your CHC chair to access copies of the reports for the last few years—this will provide a well-rounded understanding of your CHC's accomplishments and areas needing improvement.

### 4. Read other CHC reports.

The THC's website provides summaries of past reporting, as well as report highlights from active CHCs. To find this information, visit [thc.texas.gov/improve-chc-annual-reports](http://thc.texas.gov/improve-chc-annual-reports).

### 5. Take Open Meetings training.

Political appointees in Texas are directed to receive training in Texas open government laws. Free online training is provided at [texasattorneygeneral.gov](http://texasattorneygeneral.gov) (search for "open government training").

### 6. Commit to participate.

CHC statutes direct their organizations



CHC appointees recently gathered at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site for training from THC staff, including site educator Rachel Galan, at left.

to initiate and conduct programs—CHCs should be working commissions. This necessitates that all appointees be working commissioners rather than letting a few appointees carry the workload.

7. **Seek preservation solutions.** CHC statutes specify that CHC programs should result in the preservation of historic cultural resources. A CHC's job requires more than marking sites throughout the county. CHCs are stewards of county resources, requiring knowledge of their physical conditions and methods by which these places can be saved. ★

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### Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.





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## WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

**Know your Texas history?** Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email to [medallion@thc.texas.gov](mailto:medallion@thc.texas.gov). Limit one prize annually per contestant.

Need a clue? This 1839 Greek Revival-style home in the THC's Texas Forest Trail Region features a large ballroom and five fireplaces.



The photo at left is the Brooks County Courthouse in Falfurrias. The 1914 structure was restored through the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program in 2010 and was a tour stop at a recent Texas Tropical Trail region meeting. Congratulations and prizes go to the first three readers who correctly identified the site: Robyn Fincher of Texarkana, Chris Derrick of Monahans, and Ms. Santitos Hinojosa of Falfurrias. Thanks to all who participated! ★



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